

MDG

MONITORING and REPORTING:
a REVIEW of GOOD PRACTICES



United Nations Development Programme
Bureau for Development Policy
Poverty Reduction Group

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“The MDGs represent a departure from past approaches in addressing poverty. By focusing on a core set of inter-related goals and targets, development partners will now more easily track progress and measure impact of development interventions. The MDGs provide us with an opportunity to mobilize partners into action, forge new alliances for development and build national capacity for monitoring and periodic reporting”

Kenya MDGR

Introduction

In the Millennium Declaration of 2000, 189 UN member nations asserted their commitment to such core values as freedom, equality and solidarity and to such duties as promoting peace and reducing poverty worldwide. Derived from the Declaration in 2001, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set quantifiable targets for measuring progress within the Declaration's framework.

The selection of the MDGs was driven by the need for internationally agreed targets and indicators for which there were reasonably good data. The MDGs reflect a multi-dimensional understanding of poverty as deprivation, which is measured not only by income but also by various indicators of health, education, gender equality and environmental sustainability.

Progress toward the MDGs is measured and reported at the national, regional and international levels through global, regional and national MDG Reports (MDGRs). MDGRs set a baseline, document successes and focus attention on areas in need of increased effort. Used as a tool for advocacy and building alliances among development actors, the MDGRs help transform development from a top-down exercise into a participatory process. Regular monitoring and reporting challenges national and international partners to demonstrate that their initiatives produce concrete results, enhancing transparency and accountability.

This booklet is based on a review of the national MDGRs produced as of 31st January 2005. Section I presents country-level good practices for the processes involved in monitoring and reporting progress toward MDGs and section II includes summary accounts of 15 MDGRs as examples. Good practices were gathered from the MDGRs and MDGNet¹. The regional bureaux of UNDP also helped to identify good examples. Information from a survey of UN Country Teams (UNCTs)² is also used to endorse the message. The MDGRs presented in later part of the booklet were selected according to the criteria spelled out in the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) guidance note of 2003. Reports were evaluated for their clarity of content, presentation and brevity, use of disaggregated data, adaptation of the MDGs and the involvement of stakeholders in the preparation and dissemination processes.

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- 1 The MDG Network is an electronic discussion group of more than 2,000 practitioners from the UN system, governments and civil society organisations to share experiences and good practices on all aspects of MDG-related activities. Access to resources of MDG Net is limited to the subscribed members. For details, please visit the website: www.undg.org
 - 2 In March 2005, 135 UNCTs responded to a survey questionnaire on the level of engagement of government, civil society and UNCT in the MDG process. The survey was a joint initiative of the United Nations Development Group and UNDP's Bureau for Development Policy. For details, see *"Making the MDGs Matter: A country Perspective"*

These reports provide a composite picture of a good MDGR as an effective tool for advocacy. The MDGRs reflect the high level of creativity and diversity in country-level reporting.

The purpose of this review is to share good practices and not to grade the MDGRs. The following major lessons emerged from this exercise.

- The MDGR should be accessible to a non-specialist audience, as it is intended for use to create awareness and to influence the policy debate.
- Localisation and contextualisation of the global goals and targets at the country level is vital.
- Integration of the MDGs into national development strategies is a good indicator of country's ownership of the MDG agenda.
- Participation of a broad range of stakeholders in the process of preparing and disseminating the MDGR is crucial.
- Disaggregated data for the indicators helps to identify social and geographical disparities.
- The data used for MDG reporting should be of the highest quality.
- The MDGR is a tool for advocacy and awareness and therefore should be kept brief, simple and clear.

We hope that the reader will find the information presented in these pages interesting and useful. Every individual contribution to achieving the MDGs makes a difference. Only dedicated and combined efforts will turn the vision of the Millennium Declaration into a practical reality by 2015

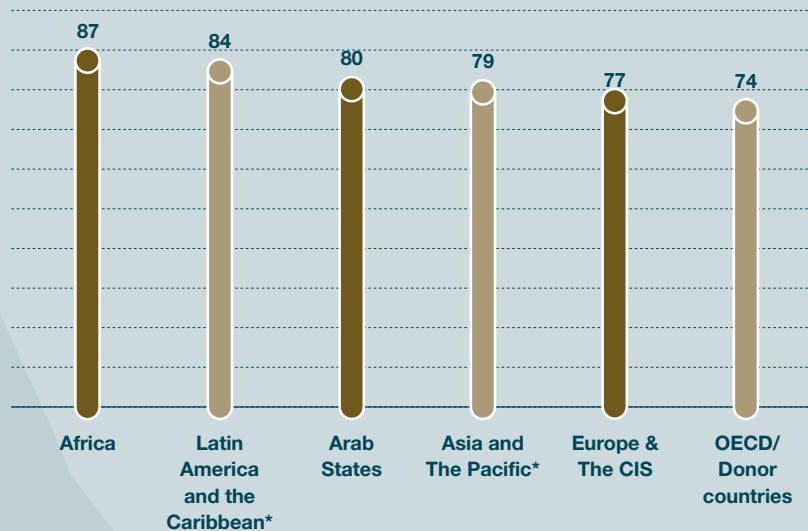
We would like to express our appreciation to Samina Anwar, Sherif Ayoub and Marisol Sanjines of the Poverty Reduction Group who drafted this report. Helpful suggestions and comments were made by representatives of the regional bureaux of the UNDP, BRSP and UNDGO. We also acknowledge the contributions made by various members of the Poverty Group, in particular Nicola Baroncini, Queenee Choudhury, Laurel Gascho, Antoine Heuty, Selim Jahan, Susanne Kuehn, Lynn MacDonald, Dorothy Rosenberg and Jan Vandemoortele.

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MDG Reports: *Where Do We Stand?*

The first MDG reports were produced in 2001 by four countries: Cambodia, Chad, Tanzania and Viet Nam. By August 2005, a total of 155 MDGRs had been published by 139 countries, including seventeen OECD and donor countries. In four years, over 80 percent of developing countries have produced at least one MDGR. Figure 1 shows the prevalence of MDGRs within each region.

FIG. 1: **Percentage of Countries with Published MDGRs**



Source: UNDG country MDGR List

* Figure does not include small islands in Asia and Latin America, which do not produce individual MDGRs.

While many MDGRs reflect creative responses to country-specific conditions, this review found regional patterns in the reporting. Reports from Latin America, for example, contain more in-depth analysis of progress towards the MDGs and more disaggregated data than reports from other regions. The Asia and Pacific countries tend to stress ways in which MDG targets and indicators can be adapted to national contexts. Countries in the Arab region tend to emphasise measures of gender equality and how pockets of poverty are being targeted. In Africa, reporting on poverty and HIV/AIDS takes on special importance. Moreover, data availability, a major challenge for MDG reporting in African countries, has improved in recent years. For a number of countries in Europe and the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States), European Union (EU) accession has been a major factor in shaping the MDG targets and indicators.

A stylized, light blue map of the African continent is positioned in the lower-left corner of the page, partially overlapping the dark teal background. The map shows the outlines of the continents and major landmasses.

SECTION

I

MDG
Monitoring and
Reporting Themes

The purpose of an MDGR is two-fold: public information and social mobilisation. At best, it should at once report on a particular nation's progress on the MDGs and inspire still more progress. Thus an MDGR can be seen as a tool for awareness-raising, advocacy, alliance-building and renewal of political commitments at the country level, as well as for building national capacity for measuring and monitoring progress. With this in mind, a set of themes drawn from the UNDG guidance note is organized to present country level good practices, which reflects various processes involved in the MDG reporting and monitoring. It includes Preparation Process, Integration with National Development Strategies, Tailoring and Customising Targets and Indicators, Localisation, Data Quality, Disaggregation, Gender, Goal 8, Dissemination Process and Report Length and Format.

Preparation Process

As part of one of the U.N.'s high-profile global campaigns, an MDGR should be designed to engage the general public and spark a debate about human development among government officials, parliamentarians, the media, and representatives from civil society organisations, professional associations and teachers in secondary and higher education. The process of preparing each MDGR helps to reshape globally agreed objectives into country-specific targets to focus the development debate on nationally defined priorities.

"The process of nationally reporting the progress of MDGs brings together decision makers, experts and researchers of different institutions to evaluate how progress can be expedited and sustained".

Brazil MDGR

FIG. 2: Stakeholders Consulted In MDGR Preparation Process

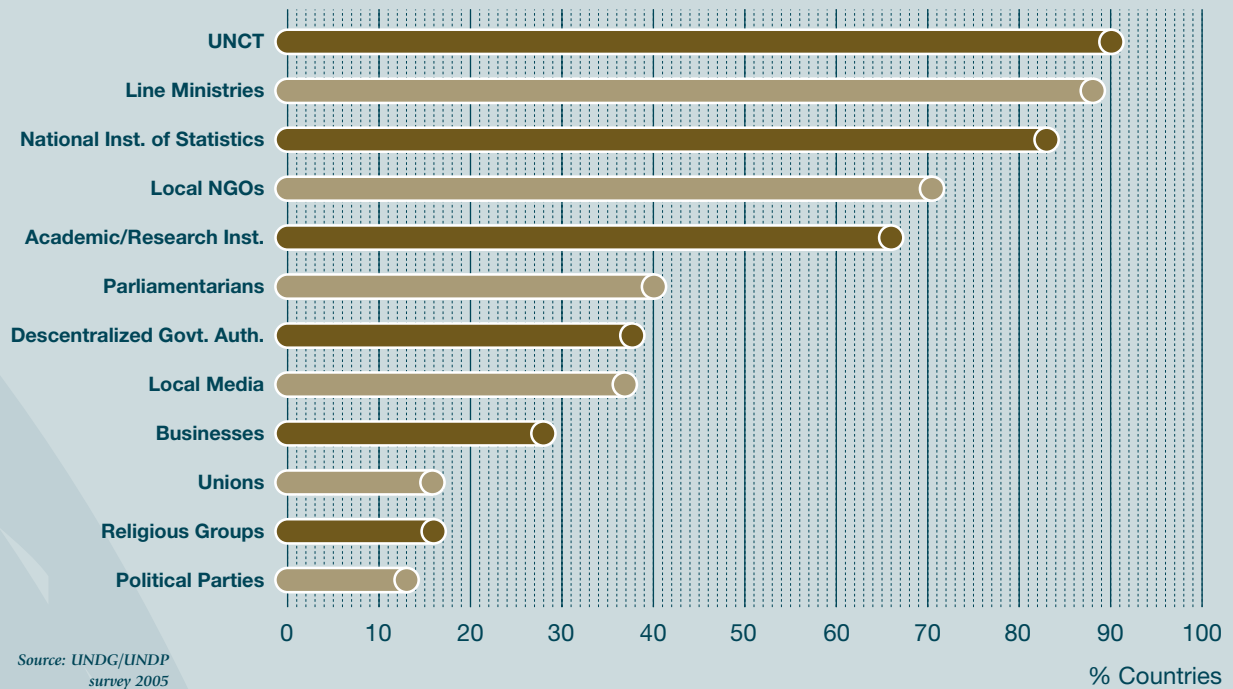
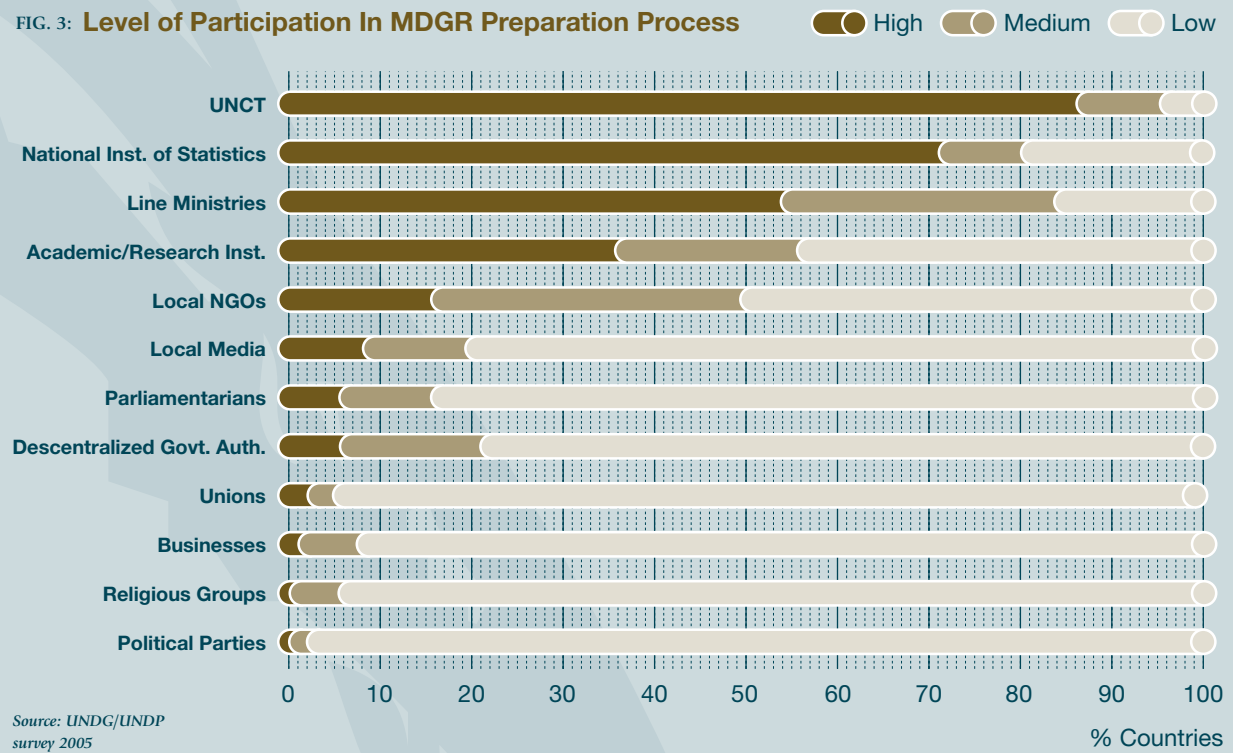


FIG. 3: Level of Participation In MDGR Preparation Process



A recent survey of 135 UNCTs conducted by the undg indicates that the level of engagement by civil society organisations in preparing MDGRs remains low. Figures 2 and 3 show that the process is still dominated by the UNCT, the national institute of statistics and line ministries. The role played by the media, local authorities, political and religious groups is far less significant.

Countries such as Albania, Kenya, Jordan, Lebanon and Peru, however, offer good models of wide consultative processes involving multiple stakeholders. Albania conducted nine months of extensive discussions with civil society, administrative and legislative counterparts to reach a consensus on nationally tailored MDG targets and indicators. In Lebanon, the Arab NGO Network for Development took the lead in preparing the report; in Jordan, the results of a series of workshops held with CSOs were incorporated into the MDGR.

A national MDG task force in Kenya conducted a series of sensitisation workshops with NGOs, as well as media briefings to raise public awareness of the MDGs. Action-Aid Kenya, together with a national council of NGOs led the NGO campaign. Similarly, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the Inter-American Development Bank were involved together with the UN agencies and civil society representatives during the process of preparing the Peru MDGR.

Integration of MDGs and National Development Strategies

The UNDG guidelines suggest that an MDGR should focus on progress toward the MDGs rather than policy recommendations or detailed analytical findings. Campaigning and building consensus around country-specific targets should be based on existing sources, such as national and sectoral development plans, national human development reports (NHDRs) and poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs). Merging these processes reduces the reporting burden shouldered by both national partners and the UN system. In low-income countries, integration of the MDG targets into the PRSP process is of critical importance.

“It has been very important to us to ensure that the MDGs and localised PRSPs are not seen as two distinct processes, but part of a comprehensive and integrated strategy for poverty eradication”

Jo Shaw, Lao PDR, MDGNet

The PRSP is designed to outline how the broad goals of economic growth and poverty reduction can be put into practice. Regular checking of a country's strategy against its intended results—as articulated in national interim MDG targets—is an ideal tool for making both evaluations and course corrections where necessary. The integration of the MDGs into the PRSP is key to avoiding duplicative, parallel processes. The first major step in integrating the two is to ensure that country-adapted MDG indicators and interim targets are monitored together with the economic indicators and targets of the PRSPs through an integrated monitoring system. Setting PRSP targets aligned with the MDGs is an effective way of splitting long-term MDG targets into time-bound intermediate steps.

MDG-based PRSPs are a relatively new paradigm. Developing a second PRSP in many countries presents a window of opportunity to align the two. However, integrating the MDGs into a PRSP takes effort, imagination and ambition. While many current PRSPs touch on several related areas and a number of PRSPs refer to MDG issues within their national development strategy³, the focus of most remains quite different from the MDG agenda. Most countries in Latin America make reference to the MDGs in their PRS policy matrix, however their goals, targets and indicators typically differ from the global MDG definitions. Some highly indebted poor countries (Bolivia, Honduras, and Nicaragua) refer explicitly to the MDGs in their revised PRSPs, while others such as Peru and Suriname do not specify any quantitative targets or indicators.⁴

Other examples of well advanced integration efforts include the Bosnian MDGR, which sets short-term PRSP targets for 2007, and the Tanzanian PRSP, in which many MDGs are captured as long-term aspirations addressed by short-term PRSP goals and targets. In Yemen, the cabinet issued a decree to all line ministries and agencies asking them to align their future plans and activities towards achieving the MDGs together with the publication of the MDGR.

Benin used its PRSP as the roadmap for achieving the MDG targets. The long-term vision, named Benin 2025—scénario Alafia—applies basic principles central to the PRSP, such as macroeconomic stability, good governance and participation of the poor, as a way to improve poverty reduction initiatives. The PRSP is also a central part of national planning in São Tomé e Príncipe aimed at developing the capacity for achieving the MDGs and shaping the national budget. In Albania, the MDGs have been incorporated into the National Strategy for Social and Economic Development.

3 Susanne Bregnbæk, 2004. *"Preliminary Study of the relationship between Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Ten Countries"*. UNDP Nordic Office

4 *"An Analysis of Poverty Reduction Strategies: Monitoring the Level of Progress Towards the MDGs"*. A Comparative Overview for Latin America and Caribbean.
<http://www.undp.org/rblac/prs/Summary%20PRSP-MDGs.doc>

Tailoring and Customising the Targets and Indicators

The global MDG targets and indicators need to be adapted—not merely adopted—to reflect national development priorities established in a process requiring a broad-based and inclusive debate. Realistic time lines for achievement are also part of the exercise of adapting targets to national realities.

“The MDGR must take into account national development priorities, thus the targets need to be contextualised to the country-specific situation—i.e., adaptation, not mere adoption of the global MDGs”

UNDG, 2003

Adapting the MDG targets to a country’s national development strategy and tailoring the indicators to the country context to monitor its progress is a step toward a country taking ownership of its development agenda. More than half of the countries that have reported so far on progress towards the MDGs have adapted the targets and indicators to some degree or another.

A number of countries have expanded the MDG agenda by adding one or more country-specific goals. For example, Viet Nam has introduced the Viet Nam Development Goals (VDGs) including four additional goals for vulnerability, governance, infrastructure and ethnicity. Similarly, Albania and Cambodia have added goals for governance and de-mining, respectively. Argentina added ‘promoting a decent work environment’ as a goal to address child labour, unemployment and social protection.

Romania and El Salvador extracted several of the targets from Goal 8 and added them as a separate goal for infrastructure and information technology development. To emphasise the significance of the targets for water and sanitation, Poland, Armenia, Tanzania and Mozambique reported them as a separate goal under the rubric, access to household amenities. Tanzania and Mozambique relocated HIV/AIDS to the second major goal on their list to emphasise its importance in their countries.

Countries have also made adjustments to the global targets to better align them with local circumstances. Turkmenistan included a target on combating terrorism as part of the goal on developing global partnerships. Poland added a target on anti-corruption. Georgia added a target on ensuring the socio-economic rehabilitation of populations affected by conflicts or natural calamities.

Some countries—the so-called MDG Plus countries—have set national targets that are more ambitious than the MDGs. Others have set less ambitious targets. Global targets are meant to encourage all countries to strive for accelerated progress but ultimately they measure aggregate global performance. The applicability of the global targets can only be tested and judged against what is realistically achievable under country-specific circumstances. Setting meaningful targets requires adaptation, not mindless adoption of the global targets. Many countries have set targets that are ambitious within their context. Burkina Faso adapted the MDG target on poverty reduction to a more realistic one-third reduction in the incidence of absolute poverty by 2015. On the other hand, Thailand set a rather ambitious target of an 80 percent reduction in poverty by 2009.

MDG indicators are also tailored to fit each country's needs. A common practice is to use the national poverty line as well as the global indicator of \$1/day. Indicators for reproductive health are included in many country reports under the maternal health target. Argentina, Bahrain and Brazil, as well as a number of Eastern European countries such as Georgia, Hungary, Slovakia, Bosnia, Slovenia and Croatia have highlighted the significance of high unemployment rates by including it as an indicator for the poverty goal. Namibia and Zambia added indicators on stunting and wasting among malnourished children. Guatemala added two extra indicators on chronic and acute malnutrition to monitor hunger. Guinea-Bissau established a specific time line for building and upgrading the educational infrastructure, including in-service teacher training.

Localisation

Sub-national comparative data by state, province or district can act as a powerful trigger for public action by revealing the geographical distribution of social and economic disparities. The process of adapting nationally defined targets to meet the needs and priorities of individual communities brings local authorities together with their constituents to agree on local priorities.

Localisation has become an increasingly common approach to creating greater citizen engagement in the development process. Strong local governance and direct participation at the local level are major factors in the improvement of living conditions. While developing meaningful local and regional equivalents of the MDG targets and indicators is a time-consuming and intensive process, successful localisation can bridge the gap between national-level strategies and budgets and local-level implementation.

Albania spent months conducting extensive dialogue and consultations at all levels before embarking on the production of its first regional MDG report. After careful review of the process and results, the approach was refined and applied in a second region, where the reporting process led to a regional development strategy and was again reviewed and revised before being replicated in the next region. Albania's approach of learning-by-doing is expected to yield MDGRs for each region of the country by the end of 2006.

Argentina, Bolivia, Mauritius, the Philippines, Romania and Viet Nam have also embarked on localising the MDGs by reporting on sub-regional-level MDG targets and indicators.

Data Quality and Sources

"The MDGR is a practical way of generating public demand for data and information on key aspects of human development"

UNDG, 2003

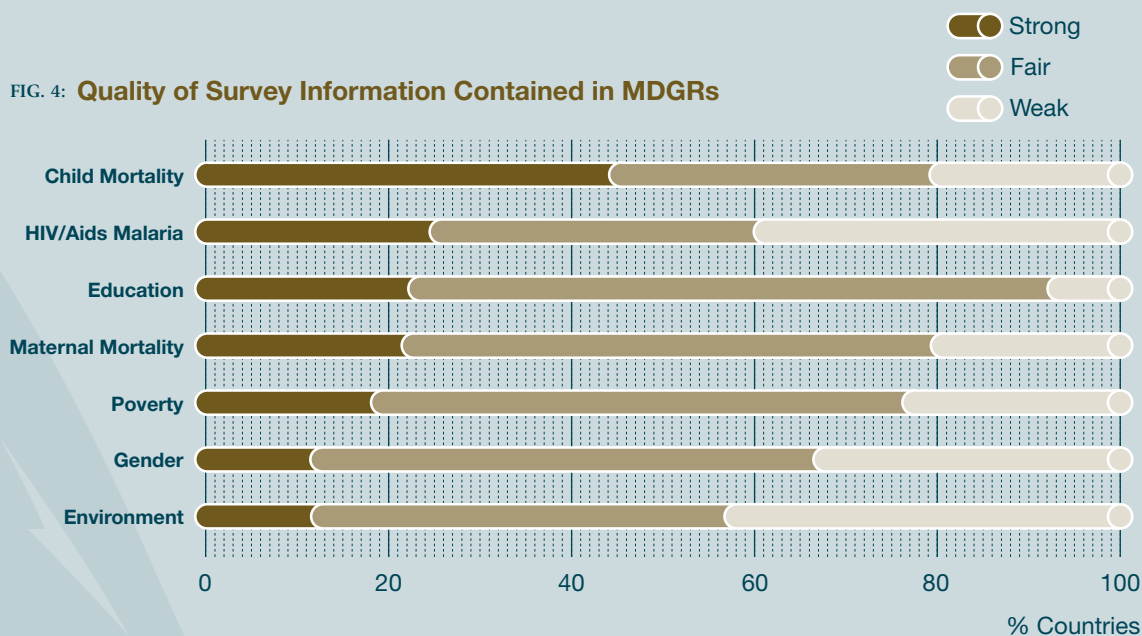
Crucial to establishing the credibility of an MDGR is the use of reliable, high quality data. The data used in MDGRs should be the best available from official sources and should be chosen to reflect nationally agreed targets. Whenever possible, disaggregated data should be used to highlight disparities across gender, ethnicity, geographical location, age or other dimensions of inequality. Sources of data and other information should be clearly indicated. Where data are not available or not considered reliable, limitations should be noted and an effort made to avoid conveying a false sense of accuracy. To monitor targets for which good quality data do not exist, proxy indicators can be used. Several Arab countries provide good examples of the appropriate use of proxies, particularly in relation to poverty.

*"Substantial difficulties arising with respect to primary data collection are related to the lack of cooperation and coordination of major surveys resulting in inadequate data on key indicators or excessive and conflicting data ...
The quality of administrative data is also a major concern"*

Cambodia MDGR

Producing reliable, high quality data continues to be a problem in many countries. A review of the quality of survey information used in a sample of MDGRs shows that most statistics fall into the category of 'fair', with the exception of child mortality, which in 45 percent of countries is 'strong'. On the other hand, data measuring the environment, HIV/AIDS, malaria and gender equality all require substantial improvement.

FIG. 4: **Quality of Survey Information Contained in MDGRs**



Source: Analysed information from the MDGRs

While the quality and reliability of data sources can be improved, a more difficult problem is the complete absence of data. This is often the case in conflict and post-conflict countries where surveys may not have been conducted for many years. Lebanon, for instance, conducted its first post-war survey in the mid-1990s and data for the year 1995 is used as the base.

Good quality statistics derived from sources such as household surveys, population censuses, academic research and administrative data are of special importance. Of the 135 countries that responded to the recent survey on MDGs engagement, 37 percent had a separate MDG monitoring system in place. It is important to re-emphasise that MDG reporting is most effective when integrated into existing monitoring systems using official data. Separate survey data should be used only when other sources are not available.

Disaggregation of Data:

"This report asks critical questions such as: why are some regions in the country faring better than others? Are we doing enough, and what more needs to be done for the goals to be met?"

China MDGR

It is important to un-bundle national progress into progress for women and men; for rural and urban residents; for young and older people; for the poor and the non-poor; and for regions, states and districts. Disaggregated data provide a clearer picture of social and economic disparities. When carefully analysed and mapped, such data are key to identifying marginalised and under-served population groups and less-developed regions. Pro-poor reforms start with disaggregation, for what is measured influences what needs to be done.

The use of disaggregated data is rising, as shown in such recently prepared MDGRs as Lithuania's. Disaggregation of household survey and census data by gender, region, ethnicity, age, and urban/rural residents has increased as a result of increased awareness of the importance of disaggregation and substantial efforts to strengthen national statistical capacity. A remaining hurdle is not solely the unavailability of reliable or recent data, but also the absence of an effort to extract the relevant information from existing data sources.

Using maps to present disparities among provinces, districts, regions, municipalities or other geographical entities is an effective way to identify regions lagging behind. The MDGRs of Viet Nam, Peru, China, Kazakhstan, Namibia, Laos, Georgia, Honduras, Kyrgyzstan and Hungary offer examples of good practices in this regard. Cameroon, Tajikistan, Indonesia and Brazil provide clear illustrations of regional disparities using charts and graphs.

Most MDGRs report the education goal with data disaggregated by gender. A number of countries also include gender disaggregated information on targets such as poverty, child mortality and HIV/AIDS. Notable among these are Brazil, Malaysia, Ethiopia, Nepal, Syria, Botswana, Viet Nam, Bahrain, Thailand, Tunisia and Turkmenistan. Guatemala's MDGR presents gender disaggregated data on access to water supply for both male- and female-headed households.

Urban/rural disaggregation is used for reporting on the water, sanitation and poverty targets in most MDGRs. Iran, East Timor, Paraguay and Indonesia also used urban/rural disaggregated data to report on indicators for HIV/AIDS, youth employment, maternal mortality and education respectively. Ethnic and socially disadvantaged groups are highlighted in the MDGRs of Romania, Bolivia, Malaysia, Thailand, Hungary and Brazil.

"Estimation masks a much more complex picture that is only revealed when the data on poverty are further disaggregated to reflect its incidence geographically and by gender"

Egypt MDGR

Gender

"Gender Equality is at the heart of reaching the MDGs"

UNDG, 2003

Monitoring the MDGs through a gender lens reveals not only gender disparities, but also many of the dynamics and interactions among the goals.

The goal on Gender Equality is reported in the MDGRs with slight variations. A common way of adapting this goal is inclusion of additional indicators especially for reproductive health. Women's political and economic empowerment is often supplemented with indicators for access to and control over productive resources such as land or inheritance rights, and indicators for female representation in local-level government as well as in the parliament. Viet Nam, Botswana, Croatia, Tajikistan, Guatemala, Lebanon and Senegal all include additional gender indicators.

The elimination of violence and discriminatory acts against women, as codified in the Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, is reflected in many recent MDGRs. Additional targets and indicators on violence against women have been added to the MDG frameworks of Botswana, Brazil, Cambodia, Croatia, Mauritius, Peru, Thailand and Viet Nam. Turkmenistan, Lebanon and Bahrain include information on poverty levels among female-headed households and the Czech Republic added a target for reducing poverty among single mothers.

"The [female] discrimination is unveiled when one analysed the indicators of their participation in the labour market and in the political sphere, aggravated by the domestic violence that they suffer".

Brazil MDGR

Goal 8: Global Partnerships

“Goal 8 is about accountability...both local and national governments, bilateral and multilateral institutions must be held accountable... If this goal is ignored, it is hard to imagine the achievement of the other goals”

Kenya MDGR

Building a global partnership for human development is a joint responsibility shared by developed and developing countries and reporting on Goal 8 is relevant to both donor and recipient countries. The review found that about a third of the MDGRs did not address Goal 8. A lack of clarity as to its relevance and a lack of data are cited as two major challenges. Nonetheless, Cote d'Ivoire, Jamaica, Lebanon, Bosnia and Peru have produced clear coverage of the goal on aid, trade and debt relief.

OECD and donor countries that have published reports on their efforts to build a global partnership include Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

Reporting on global partnership offers developing nations an opportunity to register the degree of access to global resources that has been achieved in terms of increased official development assistance (ODA), access to markets, bridging the digital divide and other parameters. Progress reports on this goal are a vital source of information on the actual transfer of ODA funds, as well as the dynamics of trade and debt relief. Developing countries' efforts to gather accurate data on these indicators contribute to the broader picture of international development progress, while also adding solid evidence to their negotiations with donor countries. For donor countries, the reports are an opportunity to profile their efforts and promote their policy approaches.

“MDG 8 needs to become, more than any other, a living framework that is enriched continuously by the cooperation between developed and developing countries”

Viet Nam MDGR

Dissemination of the MDGRs

"It is now important that citizens be informed of the report's objectives. They can become aware of how their lives will change for the better, at what pace and along what path"

Iran MDGR

The MDGR is a tool for advocacy and public awareness. Effective dissemination that leads to a broad public discussion of the information it presents is crucial for the report to serve its purpose.

The active engagement of the government and all other stakeholders throughout the process of MDGR production and dissemination is the major factor in the success of the report itself, and of the Millennium Declaration agenda. Launching an MDGR is a good opportunity for introducing the Millennium Declaration agenda to a wider audience through media and public events.

The Lao PDR initiated a campaign for the MDGs with the launch of the MDGR by the prime minister on the International Day for Eradication of Poverty. The event attracted research institutes and academia, international organisations, members of the UN system and NGOs. The Syria MDGR was launched at a gathering of governmental officials, which was followed by open seminars. In Bahrain the MDGs became the subject of deliberations in the parliament. Similarly, in Rwanda, the MDGR was presented and discussed in parliament, where parliamentarians pledged to use the MDG targets as indicators for budget and policy approvals. Yemen used the findings of its MDGR to enhance its position in re-negotiating its debt and in mobilising financial support, a concrete example of the value and potential uses of the MDGRs.

The MDGs are being popularised in different and innovative ways. Summaries of the MDGRs have been printed in national and local languages, as well as pamphlets, calendars, posters, stickers, and stamps. Documentary films have been made, and MDG slogans have been placed on packets of sugar, bus stop advertisements and matchboxes. NGOs have organised puppet shows in local languages. Children's storybooks on the MDGs have been published.

In Uzbekistan, the Ministry of Public Education and a national NGO brought the MDGs to schools with a poster competition, plays and organised games. Bhutan introduced an MDG song and video, which was sung by popular Bhutanese singers. The Uganda post office issued eight MDG stamps with designs selected in an art competition in secondary schools. In Brazil, MDG slogans and icons were placed on ATM screens. In Tunisia, a caravan travelled across the country to campaign for the MDGs by disseminating findings of the MDGR.

"The national MDG reports give meaning to the global goals. Country reports on progress towards MDGs can accelerate progress by raising public awareness, forging stronger alliances, and renewing political commitment"

Guyana MDGR

Length and Format

Brevity—a concise presentation of core messages in clear and simple language—is the mark of a good MDGR. The challenge is to highlight the most important aspects of progress across all goals and to complement the messages in the text with effective graphics. It is important to emphasise again that the MDGR is not an ‘analytical tool’ and that complex analysis of MDG progress should be avoided.

Although brevity is important, this should not rule out the inclusion of additional goals, targets, indicators and disaggregated data. There are many examples of well-balanced reports, such as the Albania and Thailand MDGRs. The key to achieving a brief but informative report is to avoid a lengthy analysis of progress and unnecessary detail. The main message can be delivered clearly and directly with a good graphic presentation. How the information is presented is just as important as deciding what to present. The Malaysia MDGR is a good example that conveys the message with visual presentations and a concise text—leaving the analytical work to the National Human Development Report.

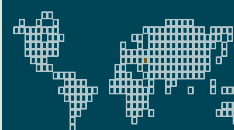
The MDGRs of Rwanda, Nepal, Swaziland, Hungary, Senegal, Bulgaria, Paraguay, Slovakia, Slovenia and Czech Republic are also exemplary for brevity and good format. Panama’s MDGR makes an imaginative presentation of each goal. The format and style of the MDGR are critical to its usefulness as a tool for campaigning and advocacy. Simplicity of language, content and style make it easily readable and accessible to a broad audience.

SECTION

II

**Selected
Examples
of MDG Reports**

Albania



The second Albanian MDG report (2004) is a good example of a wide multi-stakeholder consultative process being used to adapt the MDGs to local conditions. The goals and targets were modified to fit the national context over nine months of intensive consultations, involving government institutions, the UN system, NGOs and the private sector.

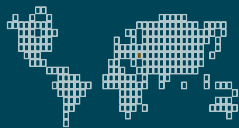
As a result of this process, Albania's second report includes country specific goals and targets. Good governance is identified as one of the priorities to reform overall state system of public administration, legislation and policies in accordance with EU standards of justice, rule of law and market economies. Indicators were developed to monitor six dimensions of good governance. The goal on building a global partnership has an adapted target to 'ensure harmonised and more effective development partnerships with the donor community'; indicators for this target tracks the percentage of donor assistance consistent with the MDGs and the public availability of information on aid flows.

Albania was one of the first countries to monitor progress towards achieving the MDGs at the sub-national level through regional MDGRs and regional development strategies. Thus far, five regional reports have been prepared and more are expected in the near future. The process of adapting the MDGs to the local level was used as a tool to mobilise communities to create local development plans and to advocate for the achievement of the MDGs in their communities, linking global, national and regional development priorities and developing the capacities of local stakeholders.

The policy framework developed by the government strongly endorsed the MDGs as guidelines for socio-economic development along with the national development strategy. The two frameworks have been integrated into a single vision for the country on its path towards EU integration and achievement of a high level of socio-economic well-being.



**With this report
come many
opportunities to
build national
capacity, by
focussing attention
on a core set of
interrelated goals
and targets
specifically relevant
to the
circumstances in
Albania..."**



Bosnia and Herzegovina



The MDGs have much to offer to this [EU accession] process as they marry the social with the economic, and provide an agenda which all of Bosnia's people can sign-up to....therefore, targets and indicators are purposefully framed in terms of achieving European standards of rights and living conditions”.



Bosnia and Herzegovina, although still recovering from war, is using the MDGs to protect the level of human development it has achieved thus far and to support its goals of peace and development. The MDG campaign began with the national Human Development Report in 2003, the purpose of which was to devise a relevant and realistic set of MDG targets and indicators and establish benchmarks for them. In September 2004, after a broad consultation process led by the UN country team and involving a range of stakeholders, the country produced its first MDG progress report.

The MDGR links the MDGs with the PRSP integrating the MDG targets with the EU social inclusion targets and indicators into a single framework that incorporates the PRSP targets. The PRSP targets were designated as interim targets to be achieved by 2007. Data on EU indicator levels (e.g. relative poverty) were incorporated into the report to illustrate the convergence of these agendas and to round out the picture of poverty and social exclusion in the country.

Bosnia contextualized few global indicators, for instance, an additional indicator, the ‘perception of living standards’ was introduced under the poverty goal to measure self-assessments of changes over time and perceived levels of inequality among social groups, which highlights the varying perceptions of Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs. Originally introduced as part of UNDP’s Early Warning System survey, the indicator tracks areas of potential tension signalling the need for policy measures to address inequality as a means of conflict-prevention in a post-war setting. Another indicator on the ‘percentage of insured citizens’ was added under the goal on health to measure the access to medication and insurance schemes, as part of a campaign dubbed “Health for All the 21st Century”.

Brazil

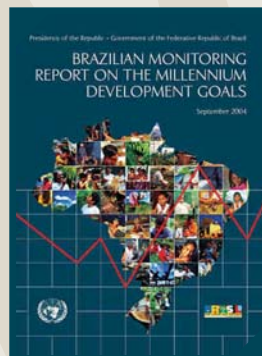


The Brazil MDG report (2004) is the product of wide dialogue and consultation among government ministries, several multi-lateral and bilateral organisations and civil society representatives. The report is an initial effort by the government to create a system to monitor the global MDG indicators and targets.

A distinctive feature of the report is the disaggregation of indicators by colour/ race to illustrate racial inequality, one of the most serious social problems in Brazil. Disparities across regions, age and between men and women are also well represented. For example, the report presents the fact that Brazilian women study longer but earn less than Brazilian men, have lower levels of political participation and much less say in decision-making.

The MDGR includes a good account of HIV/AIDS targets and indicators. Leprosy is reported as an endemic disease in Brazil, which has the highest rate in the world despite significant progress in recent years. The MDGR also reports on different sources of water supply in both urban and rural areas, revealing significant differences in the number of people having access to water supply systems in rural and urban areas.

The MDGR for Brazil is well written, presenting each target with a standard format that includes charts, graphs and maps. Well-selected pictures increase the visual effect of the other graphics used to report the progress on each goal.



It [MDGR] involves the beginning of a process that will hopefully allow all concerned, government—in its all three levels—and civil society to engage in monitoring the progress of living condition.. and in the construction of new commitments.”

Cambodia



The [MDG] report involved contextualising the MDGs, now called Cambodian MDGs (CMDGs), to better reflect realities in Cambodia. It also provides a diagnosis of Cambodia's major policies and programmes contributing to each CMDG and identifies major challenges to reach CMDGs.



Cambodia was one of the first countries to produce a MDG report. Its first MDG report (2001) initiated a public campaign to introduce the MDGs. The second report (2003) was designed to initiate public debate and a public discussion of country priorities for the localisation of the MDGs.

While the UN country team took the lead in preparing the first MDGR, Council for Social Development, a Government entity, led the second report, reflecting increasing national ownership on the MDG agenda. Expanding on the nationally adapted Cambodia MDGs, the report includes an additional 56 indicators tailored to the local situation. Having achieved the goal of reducing disparities in education between boys and girls at the primary level, Cambodia is now focusing on secondary and tertiary education and has modified the gender equality targets accordingly. A target on violence against women and children was included as part of the overall equality goal promoting empowerment and protection.

An additional goal on 'de-mining, unexploded ordnance and victim assistance' has been included as the legacy of years of warfare poses a serious obstacle to human development. This goal includes a comprehensive assistance framework to help landmine victims integrate into society.

Progress on each target and indicator is depicted in coloured maps, illustrating disparities between provinces. The provincial-level comparison can help to produce better targeted interventions.

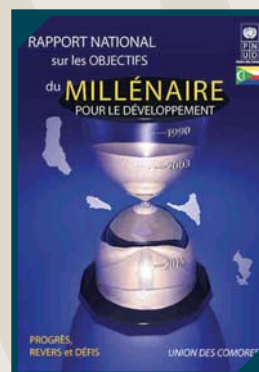
COMOROS



The MDGR for the Comoros (2003) provides ample indicators, a brief examination of the challenges and a breakdown of the data by region—all in a clear and concise manner. A “perspectives” section presents a useful summary of plans, trends and policies associated with each goal. The report concludes by highlighting four principal challenges: the lack of an effective institutional framework; the absence of a credible judicial system; the need to apply the strategies articulated in the PRSP; and high population growth.

The report gives the reader a graphic overview of the process and sequence of events that led to its production. The process began with a national workshop chaired by the president, followed by a series of technical workshops on each of the country’s three islands for substantive discussion and inclusive deliberations. A second national workshop was conducted to validate the consolidated findings, followed by a broad communication and outreach campaign around the resulting MDGR.

The report presents the development environment in Comoros and gives a candid assessment of both progress and challenges. While emphasising the need for better data, the report uses a commendable mix of graphs and tables at both aggregate and disaggregated levels.



The publication of this report intervenes at a moment when the country approaches a transition phase since it has just endowed himself with a new institutional framework and a comprehensive development strategy, of which the interim version has been recently finalised.”

côte d'ivoire



The first national report of Côte d'Ivoire on the MDGs is the fruit of a participative approach, many months of concerted effort between the government structures, civil society, private sector, research institutions, the United Nations system as well as other development partners."



The Côte d'Ivoire MDGR (2003) was formulated and published in the midst of a political crisis. The report acknowledges the reality of the crisis and its effects on the realisation of each MDG.

The report is remarkable in the richness of its statistical information. Each goal is presented in a way that both helps the reader to understand the current environment and makes a connection between the present situation and historical trends. The report does an excellent job in reporting on Goal 8, global partnerships. The MDGR consolidates information from numerous government agencies and ministries into a set of indicators on official development assistance, market access, debt sustainability, among other areas.

The presentation of each MDG follows a uniform format with each goal divided into sections on the situation and trends, challenges, and development priorities, serving to engage development partners. The presentation is further enhanced with an appropriate mix of tables, graphs and pictures for effective visual presentation and communication of the core messages.

Honduras

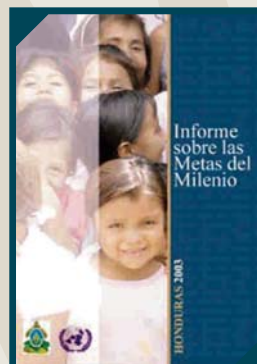


The Honduras MDGR (2003) is a product of national consultations led by the UN country team with the University of Technical Support, the National Institute of Statistics, the government, civil society organisations and several international organisations. It reflects an effort to broaden the discussion of the MDGs and of the actions needed to achieve them.

In addition to reporting on malaria and tuberculosis, the MDGR also focuses attention on local diseases such as measles, dengue fever and cholera. Similarly, additional indicators for the goal on gender equality such as the 'Human Development Index related to Gender' and 'Gender Potential Index' are included. Extreme poverty is also highlighted through an indicator for the proportion of households living under extreme conditions (one basic basket of food and services per month). The country has also set itself the goal of improving the quality of life of inhabitants living in extreme poverty by providing access to basic infrastructure and secure tenancy by 2020.

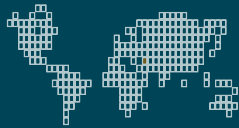
The MDGR points to the need to strengthen data collection capacity and to better link statistical analysis to policies and programmes. The report emphasises that the regular monitoring and evaluation of the MDGs requires adequate information to establish a useful baseline. This in turn depends on strengthening the capacity to generate and collect robust and reliable statistical information. Coloured maps are used throughout the report to highlight regional disparities.

In addition to reporting on the eight goals, the MDGR includes a chapter on the results of a survey on priority measures to be taken to achieve the MDGs in Honduras in 2015—a good instrument for reflecting citizens' opinions.

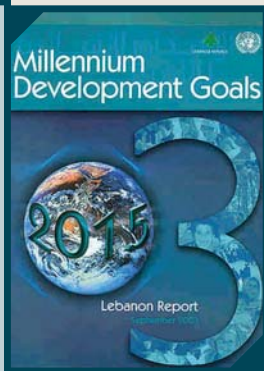


Achieving the MDGs is a historic opportunity for Honduras to generate a consensus and effective coordination that enables country to articulate efforts in order to reduce social exclusions that limit sustainable development."

Lebanon



The MDG process provides an excellent opportunity for Lebanon's partners to widen and deepen partnerships through a joint review of their relationships.”

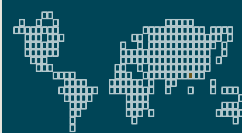


Lebanon's first MGDR (2003) was produced in a joint initiative of the government of Lebanon and the UN country team. Broad-based consultations with all major stakeholders contributed to its preparation, making the process an important outcome in itself, raising awareness, developing partnerships and forging alliances among government ministries and agencies, civil society, the media and the private sector.

The MDGR presents a clear account of the progress and challenges for each goal with a systematic assessment followed by policy recommendations. Lebanon chose to retain the global targets and indicators to facilitate international comparisons, though some of these have been tailored to the national context. For income-poverty, a Living Condition Index has been introduced to measure the percentage of the population living in very poor and poor conditions. The use of this indicator revealed significant regional disparities, as most poor areas are rural or pockets of poverty found within and around cities.

Given the lack of data for 1990 due to the civil war, Lebanon took for its base year 1995—the year the country's first post-war survey was conducted. Nevertheless, Lebanon is one of the few countries which reported sex-disaggregated data on a variety of indicators, such as infant and child mortality and incidence of tuberculosis. It also used the indicators 'access of women to economic activity' and 'decision-making at the national level' to measure gender equality, illustrating low female participation in the paid labour force.

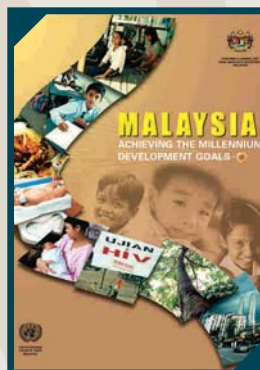
Malaysia



Malaysia's first MDGR (2005) involved wide consultations among government departments centred around the planning unit of the prime minister's office, UN agencies and various civil society organisations.

Malaysia is a country that has already achieved most of the MDGs. While highlighting this success story and its achievements to date, the report equally emphasises challenges in the years to come, using the MDGs as a reference framework for human development. Although poverty has been drastically reduced and both the urban/rural gap and differences in poverty rates across ethnic communities have narrowed, the vast majority of poor households remain concentrated in rural areas. Income inequality was identified as a key challenge for public policy, while fighting HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis are also major concerns threatening to undermine the achieved level of development.

The report provides a snapshot of the progress on each MDG with a clear picture of country's current status on each goal. It also presents disaggregated data on education and employment to demonstrate disparities among regions, ethnic groups and by gender. The report is notable for the reliability and richness of the data, which was compiled from numerous ministries and the government statistical department. Moreover, the presentation of a time-series dating from the 1970s (when the country adopted new economic policies) provides a useful perspective on the progress made in recent years. The report is a good combination of concise text, beautiful pictures and clear graphs. It delivers the main messages succinctly and with powerful illustrations.



With the fulfilment of so many of the MDGs, the challenge for Malaysia is to maintain momentum in dealing decisively with the remainder, and to identify the next set of tasks and priorities that will keep the nation moving ahead in this exemplary way..."

MOROCCO



The goal of this report is not to present a detailed analysis of the constrained domains and sectors, but rather to evaluate, in a synthetic manner, the achieved progress, and to evoke the problems that account for the major challenges that Morocco will have to face in the coming years in relation to the Millennium Development Goals.”



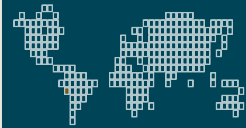
The Moroccan MDGR (2003) highlights progress and identifies areas for action. In reporting on universal primary education, it discusses the role of the private sector, non-formal education and education for handicapped children.

For each target, the report outlines the current situation, achievements and challenges, the institutional environment, and the priorities for development assistance, as well as projections for 2010 and 2015.

The report concludes with a synopsis of progress toward the MDGs and outlines the current economic and social priorities of Morocco, putting the overall development picture into perspective.

The MDGR uses a standard format for each of the targets, which adds clarity to the presentation. The report uses simple and clear language, a logical flow of information and a series of graphs to help increase understanding of the development environment.

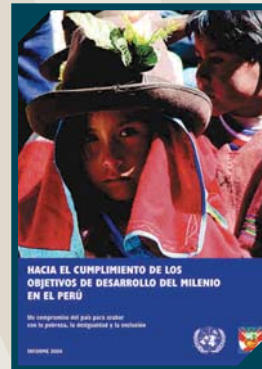
Peru



Peru's MDGR (2004) was a joint effort of the Peruvian government and the agencies of the United Nations system, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, the private sector, civil society organisations, the press and academia. Eight working groups were created to prepare a preliminary report on each target. As a result, the process of preparing the MDGR contributed to improved donor coordination in the country.

The report offers an in-depth analysis of progress toward the MDGs with a good interpretation of the figures and the national reality. It begins with a description of the political and economic situation of the country followed by a discussion of progress on each goal. The report also includes a preliminary estimation of the costs of achieving the first five goals.

The major highlight of this report is its disaggregation of indicators by such categories as age and sex (e.g., underweight children by sex, HIV/AIDS cases by age) to depict regional differences and disparities across gender and age. The report also compares Peru's progress on targets for education and child mortality with progress reported by neighbouring countries. The report uses the levels of violence against women as an indicator for the goal on gender equality. Progress on each goal is well presented with a good selection of graphs, maps and charts.



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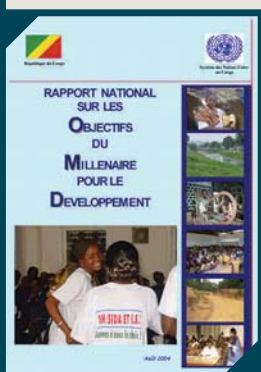
In order to achieve the MDGs in Peru, it is important to integrate the pro-poor policies of growth, redistributive policies and specific social policies. The isolated one-directional measures are extremely expensive and insufficient to be accomplished.”



Republic of Congo

“

The Millennium Development Goals constitute national political engagements that are likely to give individuals the ability to bring their government to respond to their actions.”



The Republic of Congo published its MDGR (2004) after consultations led by the government, involving the parliament, civil society organisations, the UN country team and other development partners.

The report gives an assessment of the development environment clearly and objectively. It describes policies and projects that did not work in the past or had negative consequences, and proposes strategies to achieve the MDGs based on this critique. The report also evaluates the allocation of public resources, concluding that the national budget has not sufficiently reflected MDG priorities.

To promote accountability and transparency, the MDGR proposes six critical must-haves for the Congo (grouped in what the reports calls “frames”): the need for a statistical base and a national system of information, the need to define and implement appropriate policies, the need for sufficient budgetary allocations and their correlation with established priorities, the importance of engaging the private sector and civil society, the necessity of accountability and the overarching importance of political will.

The report follows a standard format in presenting information for each MDG by outlining the situation and trends, challenges with proposals to overcome them, and prescriptions for government policies, programmes and priorities for cooperation with other development partners. This format, along with the easy flow of information communicates its message in a simple and clear fashion.

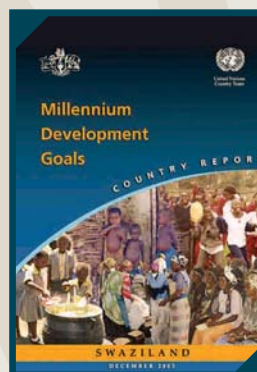
Swaziland



Swaziland produced its first MDGR (2003) as a joint effort by the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development and the UN country team after wide consultations with major stakeholders. The report reflects on the country's commitment to the MDGs and its progress towards achieving them.

The MDGR presents the status of each target, using clear charts, graphs, photos and text not exceeding two pages per goal. The report also discusses challenges to the achievement of the MDGs, and highlights potential policy options to deal with these challenges. It encourages policy makers to focus on critical areas in order to achieve the targets set for 2015. The report is written in simple language, avoids unnecessary detail and uses analysis to advocate for change, drawing attention to both problems and potential solutions.

The report is a good example of establishing linkages among the MDGs, identifying HIV/AIDS as a cross-cutting issue: The report illustrates that HIV/AIDS constitutes a threat to food security (as women are drawn into home-based caring for ill relatives), universal primary education (inability of households to pay fees), child mortality (due to mother-to-child transmission) and maternal health.



MDGs are not impossible to achieve. Experience has shown that strong leadership, deeper participation, genuine partnership and more home grown pro-poor policies can contribute to put countries on track towards achieving these goals by the target year 2015."

Thailand



The MDG Plus framework is a tribute to Thailand 'can do' results-based approach to Human Development."

Thailand Millennium Development Goals Report 2004



As Thailand has already achieved most of the global targets, its MDGR (2004) proposed a set of ambitious so-called MDG Plus targets. The MDG Plus framework tailors new targets to monitor socially and economically disadvantaged parts of Thai society, such as the population in highland areas and Northern provinces. Disaggregated data are used to illustrate regional disparities.

The MDG Plus targets include reducing the level of poverty to 4 percent by 2009, which would represent a four-fifths reduction of the 1990 level. To promote gender equality at the decision-making level, the target is to double the proportion of women in parliament, local bodies and executive committees by 2009.

Access to safe drinking water and sanitation has been turned into a separate goal. Specific indicators have been added for measuring access to various sources of drinking water, such as piped water, rain water, bottled water and water from protected wells.

The report presents progress on each goal, using graphics to highlight existing challenges, and recommends appropriate policies. A presentation of data on MDG indicators at the back of the report for years 1990-2002 not only shows the trends at a glance, but also illustrates a good way of including detailed information on various indicators over the years without jeopardising the flow of the report. Coloured maps illustrate regional disparities.

Viet Nam

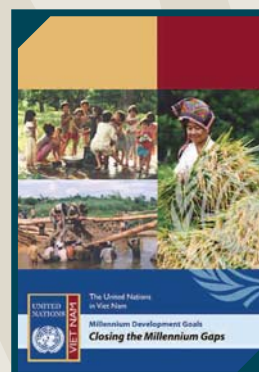


Viet Nam produced its third report in 2004. Its preparation was led by the UN country team, incorporating contributions and comments from all relevant ministries, donor agencies, the private sector and civil society organisations.

The latest MDGR focuses on those segments of the population that have benefited relatively little from the remarkable progress at the national level, drawing attention to the widening disparities across the country. The report illustrates disparities between urban and rural areas, between different provinces as well as between different ethnic groups. It recommends steps to address inequality, primarily decentralisation and local governance.

Viet Nam adapted the global MDG targets and indicators by introducing the Viet Nam Development Goals (VDGs). The MDGR includes additional goals on reducing vulnerability, improving governance for poverty reduction, reducing ethnic inequality and ensuring pro-poor infrastructure. The goal of promoting gender equality is refined by including two additional targets on reducing vulnerability of women to domestic violence and enhancing women's access to land and credit.

The MDGR provides a regional comparison for the indicators, using maps and charts to strengthen its key message on regional inequality.



“

Closing the ‘Millennium gap’ is about further building upon the impressive progress achieved in improving human well-being in Viet Nam over the past decade, while at the same time broadening the development process to include those being left behind, and reversing widening socio-economic disparities.”

REVIEWED NATIONAL MDGRS⁵

Africa	Arab States	Asia and the Pacific	Europe & CIS	Latin America & Caribbean
1 Angola	1 Bahrain	1 Afghanistan	1 Albania	1 Argentina
2 Benin	2 Djibouti	2 Bhutan	2 Armenia	2 Bolivia
3 Botswana	3 Egypt	3 Cambodia	3 Azerbaijan	3 Brazil
4 Burkina Faso	4 Jordan	4 China	4 Bosnia and Herzegovina	4 Costa Rica
5 Burundi	5 Kuwait	5 Indonesia	5 Bulgaria	5 Dominican Rep.
6 Cameroon	6 Lebanon	6 Iran	6 Croatia	6 El Salvador
7 Central African Rep.	7 Morocco	7 Lao PDR	7 Czech Rep.	7 Guatemala
8 Chad	8 Palestine	8 Malaysia	8 Georgia	8 Guyana
9 Comoros	9 Saudi Arabia	9 Mongolia	9 Hungary	9 Haiti
10 Congo (Rep.)	10 Syria	10 Nepal	10 Kazakhstan	10 Honduras
11 Cote d'Ivoire	11 Tunisia	11 Philippines	11 Kosovo	11 Jamaica
12 Ethiopia	12 Yemen	12 Timor-Leste	12 Kyrgyzstan	12 Nicaragua
13 Gabon		13 Thailand	13 Lithuania	13 Panama
14 Gambia		14 Viet Nam	14 Poland	14 Paraguay
15 Ghana			15 Romania	15 Peru
16 Guinea			16 Slovak Rep.	16 Uruguay
17 Guinea Bissau			17 Slovenia	
18 Kenya			18 Tajikistan	
19 Liberia			19 Turkmenistan	
20 Madagascar			20 Ukraine	
21 Malawi				
22 Mali				
23 Mauritania				
24 Mauritius				
25 Mozambique				
26 Namibia				
27 Niger				
28 Nigeria				
29 Rwanda				
30 Sao Tome				
31 Senegal				
32 Swaziland				
33 Tanzania				
34 Togo				
35 Uganda				
36 Zambia				

⁵ Country MDGRs produced and launched as of 31st January 2005 have been reviewed and included in the booklet. For countries which have two or more reports, the most recent one is reviewed except for Azerbaijan, Egypt and Philippines, which published second report after January 2005.



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